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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/670,047	09/24/2003	Stefan Bohn	TRW(ASG)5943-1	5029

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EXAMINER

DUNN, DAVID R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3616

DATE MAILED: 06/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/670,047

Applicant(s)

BOHN ET AL.

Examiner

David Dunn

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 September 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/974,959.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/24/03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

### **DETAILED ACTION**

The preliminary amendment filed 9/24/03 has been entered. Claims 1-15 are canceled and claim 16 is pending.

#### ***Priority***

1. Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d). The certified copy has been filed in parent Application No. 09/974,959.

#### ***Information Disclosure Statement***

2. The information disclosure statement filed 9/24/03 is acknowledged. See enclosed IDS form.

#### ***Drawings***

3. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the "large number of chaotically arranged individual folding lines, several main folding lines being present that run in a slightly spiral shape around a center" must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a

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drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101***

4. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

5. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The claim is directed to neither a "process" nor a "machine," but rather embraces or overlaps two different statutory classes of invention. The claim appears to claim both an apparatus and a process. See MPEP §2173.05(p) II or Ex Parte Lyell, 17 USPQ2d 1548 (B.P.A.I., 1990). The Examiner respectfully requests Applicants to expressly state whether they intend to claim a product claim or a process claim. It appears Applicants are claiming a medium (a product claim placing it within the §101 category of a machine) and yet are still attempting to claim a method or process claim ("a method comprising").

*Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112*

6. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

7. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. The specification does not clearly describe how to fold the airbag such that the folded airbag has “a wall which comprises a large number of chaotically arranged individual folding lines, several main folding lines being present that run in a slight spiral shape around a center.” It is not clearly describe how to fold the airbag to result in this specific result.

8. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

9. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The phrase "in particular" renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitation(s) following the phrase are part of the claimed invention. See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

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Additionally, claim 16 is indefinite as it is unclear what is being claimed. It is unclear if the claim is directed to an apparatus or method as the claim appears to encompass both an apparatus and method.

Additionally, claim 16 is unclear as it appears to recite "a folded airbag", however the body of the claim recites various elements such as the "flexible element" and the "cover" which are not part of the airbag. Therefore, it is unclear if just the airbag is claimed or if applicant claims additional structure outside of the airbag.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reh et al. (6,115,998) in view of Aich et al. (6,086,089).

Reh et al. discloses a folded airbag folded by means comprising the following steps: the airbag is spread out on a base (see 5 in Figure 1; see also Figure 12) within an area that is encircled by a flexible element (34; see Figures 13-14), a cover (3) is placed onto the flexible element, the flexible element is pulled together by pulling at a second end thereof (by 37), as a result of which the airbag is pushed together, the airbag having a wall which comprises a large number of chaotically arranged individual folding lines (see Figure 5), several main folding lines being present that run in a slightly spiral shape around a center (see Figure 6c).

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Reh et al. fails to show the airbag being acted upon with pressure.

Aich et al. teaches a similar method of folding an airbag in which the air bag is acted upon with pressure (by 34, see Figure 2) before folding. Aich et al. also shows a cover (14) to cover the airbag before it is acted upon by pressure.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Reh et al. with the teachings of Aich et al. to apply the airbag with pressure in order to more easily spread the airbag out before the folding step.

### *Conclusion*

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Kleeberger et al. ('587) shows a method for folding an airbag. Takata (Heudorfer et al.) shows an airbag folding of interest.

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Dunn whose telephone number is 703-305-0049. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thur, alt. Fridays, 9:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on 703-308-2089. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Dunn', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

David Dunn  
Primary Examiner  
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